Draft budget proposals

543. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Government are committed to lift the veil of secrecy in the Governance and make it more transparent;

(b) whether he is aware that the Government of Andhra Pradesh had released budget draft proposals for debate among the public;

(c) if so, whether he will also follow suit and make public the union budget draft proposals as part of providing transparency in the Governance; and

(d) if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) to (d) Government of India is committed to progressively greater transparency in its functioning, including budget making process. Clause 6 of the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Bill, 2000 introduced in December, 2000 specifically provides for more transparency in fiscal operations and for minimising, as far as practicable, secrecy in the preparation of the annual budget.

Floating of bogus firms

544. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that several freight forwarding companies are engaged in money laundering by floating bogus firms in different countries;

(b) whether Government are aware that M/s. Continental Carriers, RZ-293, A-Block Mahipalpur Extn. and M/s. Skyways, RZ-128, 129-A, Mahipalpur Extn., New Delhi-37 are engaged in a racket involving huge amount of money laundering under the guise of false exports in connivance with several exporters;

(c) if so, whether Government propose to institute an enquiry against such exporters;

(d) if so, by when; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN) (a) No. Sir. The Government has not come across any case in the recent past where freight forwarding companies were found to be engaged in money laundering by floating bogus firms in different countries.

(b) to (e) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Duty draw back frauds by cargo companies

545. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that several cargo clearance companies are indulging in irregularities like overinvoicing of exports to claim huge duty draw back benefits and routing funds through hawala channel in connivance with traders;

(b) whether Government are aware that M/s. Continental Carriers, RZ-293, A-Block, Mahipalpur Extn. and M/s. Skyways, RZ-128, 129-A, Mahipalpur Extn., New Delhi-37 and other such companies are indulging in massive frauds resulting in false duty drawback claims and illegal money laundering activities;

(c) if so, the action being taken against such companies; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN) (a) to (d) Instances have come to the notice of the Government where cargo clearance companies have acted in connivance with the exporters to commit irregularities like overinvoicing to claim higher duty drawback benefits. In all such cases, proceedings under the Customs Act of 1962 & Custom House Agents Licensing Regulations, 1984 have been initiated against the cargo clearance companies and the exporter, However, during the recent past, no such cases have been detected against the two companies *viz.*, M/s. Continental Carriers, RZ.293,A-B1ock, Mahipalpur Extn., and M/s. Skyways, RZ-128, 129-A, Mahipalpur Extn. New Delhi-37.

Revenue collection targets of States

546. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether almost all the States have borrowed double the amounts projected to fund their Ninth Plan share;